

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)  
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE (FNS)  
SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAMS DIVISION (SFPD)**

**NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON MATERNAL,  
INFANT AND FETAL NUTRITION  
July 19 -21, 2011  
MEETING MINUTES**

The National Advisory Council on Maternal, Infant and Fetal Nutrition (Council) met at the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) National Office in Alexandria, Virginia, on July 19-21, 2011. This public meeting, announced in the Federal Register on June 29, 2011, was called to order by Debra R. Whitford, Director, Supplemental Food Programs Division (SFPD), FNS. The agenda and Council Membership for the meeting are attached.

**Tuesday, July 19, 2011**

**Welcome/Opening Remarks/Introductions/Overview of the Meeting**

Ms. Whitford welcomed members and opened the meeting by introducing herself, recognizing Thomas O'Connor, Associate Administrator, Special Nutrition Programs and Council Chairperson Evelyn Delgado. Council members were asked to introduce themselves and mention their affiliations. Ms. Whitford then introduced Mr. O'Connor. Mr. O'Connor spoke briefly about the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). The meeting was then turned over to Ms. Whitford, who introduced Council Chairperson Evelyn Delgado.

Ms. Delgado advised the Council Members about their roles on the Council and reviewed the meeting agenda.

**WIC Program Updates & Reauthorization**

Ms. Whitford provided an update for the *Actions Taken* on the 2009 Council recommendations for both WIC and CSFP. An overview of the provisions from the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 was provided. Additional updates were provided on WIC funding, breastfeeding and nutrition services activities, food package, WIC online prescreening tool, WIC publications, and the new 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and *My Plate* resources.

**WIC Food Package**

Anne Bartholomew, Branch Chief, Nutrition Services Branch, SFPD, provided an update on the WIC food packages. The interim rule that revised the WIC food packages was issued

December 6, 2007. The implementation of the interim rule was completed in Fall 2009, and went very smoothly. The public comment period for the interim rule ended February 1, 2010. FNS received 7,764 comments on the interim rule. Comments can be viewed at [www.reggs.gov](http://www.reggs.gov).

Ms. Bartholomew also highlighted the December 31, 2009, interim rulemaking, Revisions to the WIC Food Packages Rule To Increase Cash-Value Voucher For Women. This rule increased the cash-value voucher to \$10 for pregnant, partially breastfeeding and postpartum women. All States agencies were required to implement the increase by April 30, 2010, but many of them implemented much earlier.

### **WIC Technology & Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)**

Patty Davis, Branch Chief, State Technology Branch, SFPD, discussed WIC technology and WIC Electronic Benefit Technology (EBT). Ms. Davis provided an update on the fiscal year (FY) 2011 WIC Appropriation, which provided \$35 million for technology. Priorities for funding are: existing EBT/State Agency Models (SAM) State agencies with current cooperative agreements; new EBT projects (planning and implementation); large Management Information System (MIS) projects started w/ ARRA funding; and other information technology projects that further FNS's goals to upgrade WIC technology – projects related to technical standards, partial funding of new MIS projects outside of SAM, etc.

Ms. Davis also provided an update on MIS activities. Current SAM projects include: Successful Partners in Reaching Innovative Technology (SPIRIT); Mountain Plains State Consortium; and Crossroads Consortium.

Ms. Davis provided an EBT update including a discussion of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 EBT provisions. Wyoming; New Mexico; Texas; Michigan; Nevada, the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada; Chickasaw Nation, Oklahoma; Isleta Pueblo, New Mexico; and Cherokee, Oklahoma have EBT statewide. Kentucky is expanding to Statewide. Oklahoma, Virginia, and West Virginia are in design and development phases for EBT and 21 States are in the planning phase.

### **Wednesday, July 20, 2011**

Ms. Whitford opened the meeting and introduced Audrey Rowe, Administrator, FNS.

Ms. Rowe welcomed and thanked the Council Members for their commitment to WIC and CSFP. Ms. Rowe spoke about the current challenging fiscal climate and its impact on FNS Programs.

Ms. Rowe encouraged the Council to spread the message about the positive impacts of WIC and CSFP to their community leaders, State government officials and congressional representatives in their own States.

## **National Studies and Initiatives Updates**

Jay Hirschman, Director, Special Nutrition Staff, Office of Research and Analysis, provided the FNS WIC Research Update. Mr. Hirschman discussed the Food Package-Related Studies, which include: WIC Birth Month Study; WIC State Food Package Policy Study; and the Nutrition Assistance Client Shopping Patterns at Farmers' Markets.

Mr. Hirschman provided updates on other WIC-related studies of interest including: WIC Medicaid Study II; WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Study; WIC Infant and Toddler Feeding Practices and Nutrition Education Study-2; WIC Local Agency Breastfeeding Policy Inventory; the National WIC Food and Nutrition Study; the National Survey of WIC Participants – II; Assessment of WIC Vendor Management Practices; WIC Vendor Erroneous Payments Annual Estimates; WIC Participant and Program (PC) 2010; and the WIC Analysis and Modeling Study.

## **WIC Funding**

Joan Carroll, Branch Chief, Funding, Reporting, Analysis & Monitoring Branch, SFPD, provided an overview of WIC funding. The WIC funding process begins with WIC receiving an appropriation from Congress. WIC is a discretionary program and must compete for funds. If no appropriation is passed by October 1, then WIC is funded under a continuing resolution.

Ms. Carroll explained the Nutrition Services and Administration funding formula and announced that the Fiscal Year 2011 Appropriation is \$6,734,026,956 (after 0.2% rescission). Ms. Carroll reviewed the FY 2012 President's Budget Request and FY 2012 House Mark for WIC.

## **Breastfeeding Promotion & Support**

Patti Mitchell, Senior Program Analyst, Nutrition Services Branch, SFPD, provided an update on breastfeeding promotion and support activities. FNS breastfeeding initiatives are built on the successes of *Loving Support Makes Breastfeeding Work*, USDA's national breastfeeding promotion campaign. FNS contracted with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) to conduct a workshop with experts in breastfeeding, social marketing, and WIC to explore issues related to breastfeeding promotion and support in the WIC Program and the *Loving Support* campaign. The workshop was conducted by the IOM on April 26, 2011, in Washington, DC. The invited experts provided information on the actions needed to effectively build on the successes of the existing *Loving Support* campaign and ultimately further the WIC Program's breastfeeding promotion and support efforts. IOM will provide a summary report of the workshop in September 2011. Subsequently, FNS plans to release a Request-for-Applications to update the *Loving Support* campaign based on the recommendations of the experts involved in the workshop as well as the public comments received.

Ms. Mitchell reported that the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Public Law 111-296, included several provisions which strengthen support for breastfeeding and described FNS efforts to implement these provisions.

Ms. Mitchell announced that on March 31, 2010, FNS awarded 20 State agencies the first ever WIC breastfeeding performance bonuses. FNS' breastfeeding performance bonuses are a new effort to recognize and reward State agencies that achieve improvement or high rates of breastfeeding. The 20 State agencies granted these awards included: Alaska; Navajo Nation; New York; Oregon; Washington; American Samoa; Five Sandoval, New Mexico; Santo Domingo, New Mexico; Zuni, New Mexico; Virgin Islands; Louisiana; Missouri; Nevada; New Hampshire; Texas; Ute Mountain Tribe, Colorado; Northern Marianas; Pleasant Point, Maine; Omaha Nation, Nebraska; and Osage Nation, Oklahoma.

Ms. Mitchell stated that the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act extends the Breastfeeding Performance Bonuses enacted in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (P.L. 111-80). The funds allotted for the performance bonuses will increase from \$5 million to \$10 million and not more than 15 State Agencies can receive bonus awards FNS is currently developing the methodology to award bonuses. We plan to make awards by the end of this fiscal year.

Ms. Mitchell gave an update on breastfeeding peer counseling, which continues to receive funding. The FY 2010 WIC appropriation provided \$69.84 million for State agencies to build upon and expand breastfeeding peer counseling efforts. Almost every WIC State agency (except for 3 Indian Tribal Organizations and 1 territory) has accepted peer counseling funds since the set-aside was made available in FY 2009.

Ms. Mitchell provided an update on the upcoming regional Peer Counseling Trainings, *Loving Support Through Peer Counseling: A Journey Together*. The three-day training update (train the trainer) consists of day 1 for Managers and days 2 and 3 for Trainers of Peer Counselors. The trainings will begin October-November, 2011.

## **CSFP**

Laura Castro, Branch Chief, Policy Branch, Food Distribution Division (FDD) introduced Ashley Bress, Program Analyst and Michelle Waters, Program Analyst, FDD. Ms. Bress discussed the CSFP food package, which contains: infant formula and rice cereal; bottled juices; nonfat dry and UHT milk; peanut butter or dried beans; canned meat or poultry; canned vegetables and canned fruit. CSFP operates in 39 States, the District of Columbia and 2 Indian Tribal Organizations.

CSFP participants categories are: low-income elderly (at least 60 years old), infants under 1 year, children under 6 years, pregnant women, and breastfeeding and post-partum women, up to one year after the end of the pregnancy.

Ms. Waters provided an update on FY 2011 resources and caseload. She discussed the FY 2011 full-year continuing resolution which provided \$175.7 million after rescission to CSFP. On December 30, 2010, FNS assigned tentative caseload and administrative grants to new States for use effective January 1, 2011. On May 13, 2011, all States received their final caseload allocation.

The President's FY 2012 Budget requests \$176.788 million to maintain current caseload of 604,931.

Ms. Waters discussed how CSF and WIC Programs collaborate together. About 3.4 percent of CSFP participants are women, infants, or children. Individuals cannot participate in both WIC and CSFP at the same time

CFSP regulations require local agencies to provide women, infants, and children applicants' written information about WIC and other programs. In areas, where both CSFP and WIC operate, State and local agencies are encouraged to refer eligible individuals to WIC, since they have greater accessibility to healthcare and nutrition education. The more referrals to WIC, the more elderly people CSFP can serve within caseload – everyone wins.

### **Elections for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson**

The Council elected Stan Bien as the Chairperson and Dr. Grace Chang as the Vice-Chairperson. They will assume their duties at the 2012 Council meeting.

**Thursday, July 21, 2011**

### **Logistics & Wrap-up**

Mr. O'Connor thanked the Council for a very productive meeting and presented Ms. Evelyn Delgado, Ms. Elizabeth Chace-Marino, Ms. Renee Walker-Andrew, and Ms. Linda Franklin with certificates of appreciation for their tenures on the Council.

The Council discussed their draft recommendations and cover letter, including a timeline for when the recommendations would be final and mailed.

The next annual Council Meeting will be held July 17-19, 2012.

### **Adjournment**

Ms. Whitford and Ms. Delgado adjourned the meeting.